The Dharmapuram-Manakudi road, again, will be a useful work; but, it would cost about Rs. 15,000 including land acquisition. It may be taken up when funds are available.

Wells have been sunk in Nanjinad in various places. Land is going to be acquired for sinking a public well in the Parakkai pakuthi.

The road from Parakkai-Gandhipuram to Suchindram tank was placed before the Road Board, and the consideration of it has been deferred pending additional information. It will be placed before the Road Board at its next meeting.

Drinking water wells will be provided as requisitions are received by the Sanitary Commissioner. Borings have been taken by the Chief Engineer in Puttalfom.

Free grazing of all domestic animals is allowed in all reserves and plantations which are not closed against grazing. A small fee is levied for the removal of green manure, and this is considered necessary.

Your request that members of this Assembly should get all the privileges enjoyed by members of the Legislative Council is noted for consideration.

187. Responsible Government in Travancore.

MR. N. VISVANATHA PILLAI (*Quilon taluk, Group I*) said that he had repeatedly represented about the necessity for the early establishment of responsible government in the State for the past six years. His Majesty the King Emperor had graciously announced that responsible government would be granted to India at no distant date. The people of Travancore were eminently fit to have responsible government. They believed that government by the people for the people was the best form of government. Their Excellencies Lord Reading and Lord Irwin in their memorable speeches made in Hyderabad had advised the Rulers of Indian States to introduce responsible government in their respective States. The people of Travancore had been agitating for a long time for the introduction of responsible government in the State. The South Indian States People's Conference held at Trivandrum under the presidentship of Sir M. Visvesvara Aiyah had passed a resolution urging the need for the establishment of responsible government at an early date. The Butler Committee had remarked that Travancore and Mysore were the two States which were eminently fitted for responsible government. Travancore was the first State to establish a Legislative Council 35 years ago. The Sri Mulam Popular Assembly has been in existence for the last 28 years. The political consciousness of the people was further apparent from the 100 and odd newspapers published in the State. When the idea of an All-India Federation was looming large before the people, they had every right to demand that they should be enabled to participate in the administration of their State.

When he spoke about the subject during the time of Mr. M. E. Watts, he read out an extract from an article contributed by the late Sir. P. Rajagopalachariar, to the effect that the Maha Rajas of Travancore had been constitutional rulers who were

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always acting on the advice of their trousted ministers Nobody disputed the fact that the Maha Rajas had been perfectly constitutional and that the people had been perfectly loyal to their Sovereign. But if the implication was that ministerial responsibility existed in Travancore and that it was tantamount to responsible government, the proposition was not acceptable. This might be true in the case of countries where the voice of the people was predominent in their Councils and where the ministers who were the leaders of the majority party, were responsible to their party and to the Legislature. But in Travancore, the minister, who was more often an outsider whose services had been borrowed from the British service, was responsible only to the Maha Raja and the British Government. He was not responsible to the people. He was not very anxious to satisfy the aspirations of the people, because his position was secure, whatever the people might think of him and his administration. The late Dewan's reply to the same representation was that the Ruling House of Travancore had ever been solicitous about the welfare of the people and what was best for the people would be done without any demand. There was neither wisdom nor statesmanship in that statement. Nobody questioned the gracious solicitude of the Soveriegn for the welfare of the people of the State. To say that the people should not voice forth their aspirations and grievances was to cut at the root of all representative institutions. The Maha Rajas of Travancore had been gracious enough to establish various popular institutions, such as Municipal Councils, Village Panchayats, Legislative Council and the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, for the purpose of associating the representatives of the people in the administration of the State and for hearing their views, aspirations and grievances. The political theory preached by the late Dewan was an obsolete one, which carried back the people to the ancient days when there were no representative institutions. The member said that he was repeating the demand for the establishment of responsible government, fired by the hope that the young Maha Raja, who has issued a gracious message that His Highness's interests were indissolubly linked with those of the people as well as his trusted minister, who had been brought up in a democratic atmosphere and had been serving under a form of responsible government, would appreciate the view point of the people and would inaugurate at an early date administrative changes involving responsible government.

It had been the practice in the State to take what was cast off in British India. When the Minto-Morley Reform was substituted by the Montford Reforms, the Travancore Government reformed the local Legislative Council and shaped it in its existing form. It was true that the Council had a non-official majority and had powers to interpellate and to move resolutions. But the non-official majority was a mere sham and the resolutions passed by the Council were totally disregarded by the Government. Only three per cent. of the people had franchise. Of the 50 members, 15 were officials. The 7 nominated members and the representatives of the *Jenmi*, Planting and *Edavaka* constituencies consistently sided with the Government. The

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Dewan-President of the Council had been consistently whittling down the powers of the Council under the Regulation and the Rules. Interpellations were not properly answered. Inconvenient interpellations were generally disallowed. There was no elected Deputy President to the Council, though in the Cochin Legislative Council, which was of later origin, the Deputy President was elected.

The British Government were proposing to give up diarchy in Provinces and to introduce full responsible government. The member requested that at least the diarchy system might be introduced in the State. The system had been tried in British India with advantage. The administration of the State should be in the hands of ministers who should be made responsible to the Legislature and should be removable by the majority of the Council. Matters relating to treaty relations, such as the army, subsidy, railway, tariff, etc., might be reserved by the Dewan and the other matters transferred to the ministers. Adult suffrage should be introduced and the practice of nominating the members entirely abolished. The Council should have its President elected by the members themselves.

It was gratifying that His Highness the Maha Raja had announced that the Assembly would be reformed and placed on a statutory basis. The Assembly had been useful to the people in various ways. But it had outlived its usefulness as a result of the reform of the Legislative Council, the creation of Municipal Councils, etc. The Assembly had now become a congregation of petitioners. There was no need for a bi-cameral Legislature in the State and it would be a waste of public funds to create an upper house, and give a further lease of life to this unwanted institution. Nobody would be benefited by the reform of the Assembly on the model of the Legislative Council. It would be more beneficial to amalgamate the Assembly and the Legislative Council into a Parliament and to appoint ministers responsible to the Parliament.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Visvanatha Pillai, political reforms will undoubtedly come in, and, when the new schemes have been worked out, your suggestions will be considered.

188. Some constructive suggestions to improve the defective constitution of the present representative institutions in the State so as to enable them to effect an efficient administration by means of an elected ministry, responsible to the Dewan assisted by an Executive Council appointed by the Dûrbar on the basis of the principle of strict communal representation.

MR. KOMILEZHATTU SANKARAN (*Nominated*) before submitting his proposals regarding the development of the representative institutions of the State, offered a few remarks about the nature of the problem that had to be tackled and the objects to be achieved thereby. In the first place, the problem that confronted the State was not the same as the problem in British India. In Travancore there was a monarchy represented by an ancient Royal Family, enjoying the loving homage and loyalty of all classes of people. As in Great Britain and other constitutional monarchies, the prestige and the authority of the throne had to be left untouched so that it might

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